

**BEST AVAILABLE COPY**REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to a Final Office Action mailed June 22, 2004 and an Advisor Action mailed September 29, 2004. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the subject application as amended herein.

Claims 1-24 have been cancelled from the present application. Claims 25-46 have been added to the present application.

Although dependent claims 22-24 were allowable, Applicant has opted to cancel them and add new claims 25-46 to more clearly capture the patentable essence of the allowable subject matter.

In the June 22, 2004 Final Office Action, claims 1-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,515,969 issued to Michael R. Smith (hereinafter "Smith"). Claims 1-21 have been cancelled without prejudice, thereby rendering the rejection of such claims moot. New claims 25-46 have been drafted to clearly distinguish over Smith. For example, claim 25 states:

A method comprising:  
receiving an attribute at a particular node in a network, said attribute being disseminated among a plurality of nodes comprising the network;  
determining if the attribute appears caught in a loop in the network; and  
registering the attribute for the node if the attribute does not appear to be caught in a loop in the network.

In claim 25, an attribute is being disseminated among a plurality of nodes in a network. When the attribute is received by a particular node, claim 25 determines if the attribute appears to be caught in a loop in the network. If the attribute does not appear to be caught, the attribute can be registered for the node.

Smith, in contrast, specifically describes using spanning trees when disseminating information among devices in a network (Smith; col. 5, lines 41-44, 56-67; and col. 6, lines 1-8). That is, Smith queries a spanning tree engine to decide where to forward information from one device to the next (Smith; col. 6, lines 9-27). Spanning trees are specifically designed to avoid the formation of loops in a network (Smith; col. 2, lines 11-16). In other words, by using a spanning tree, Smith avoids sending messages into loops. Since Smith will not send a message into a loop, Smith has no motivation whatsoever to determine if a message is caught in a loop when the message is received.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Smith does not suggest, disclose, or enable "determining if the attribute appears caught in a loop in the network," as claimed in new claim 25.

Thus, for at least the reasons discussed above, Applicant respectfully submits that new claim 25 is patentable over Smith.

Applicant submits that the reasoning presented above with respect to new claim 25 similarly applies to new claims 26-46. Thus, for at least the reasons

discussed above, Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 26-46 are likewise patentable over Smith.


In conclusion, Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 25-46 are now in a condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests allowance of such claims.

Please charge any shortages and credit any overages to our Deposit Account No. 50-0221.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 10/26, 2004

  
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